

Message Text

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44

ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMCONSUL OPORTO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 762

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SREF, PINS, PINT, AO, PO

SUBJECT: ANGOLAN REFUGEES

REF: OPORTO 299

1. DURING RECENT THREE-DAY PERIOD, 26 ANGOLAN REFUGEES CALLED AT CONSULATE. HALF APPLIED FOR IMMIGRANT VISAS; THE REST INQUIRED ABOUT IMMIGRATION/WORK POSSIBILITIES OR APPLIED FOR NON-IMMIGRANT VISAS. REFUSAL RATE FOR NON-IMMIGRANT VISA APPLICATIONS BY REFUGEES AVERAGES 80 PERCENT AT PRESENT TIME.

2. I EXPECT THIS ADDED CONSULAR WORKLOAD TO CONTINUE. INTERGRATION OF REFUGEES INTO PORTUGUESE SOCIETY IN THE NORTH REMAINS HAMPERED BY LACK OF HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT AND RESETTLEMENT FUNDS, PLUS SHEER NUMBERS INVOLVED. IN SOME INTERIOR DISTRICTS, REFUGEES NOW COMPOSE BETWEEN 5-10 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION. THEIR MISERY IS LITTLE NOTICED THERE. HOWEVER, BECAUSE IN MOST CASES THEY SQUEEZE IN WITH RELATIVES AND ASSIST IN AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY.

3. PROBLEMS ARE MORE SEVERE WITH REFUGEES IN URBAN AREAS. THUS FAR THERE HAS BEEN NO REAL CRISIS. AS ONE REFUGEE RECENTLY TOLD ME: "I AM MORE PREOCCUPIED WITH FEEDING MY FAMILY THAN PARTICIPATING IN RALLIES." HOWEVER, AS THE ECONOMY AND WINTER

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WORSENS, REFUGEES WILL BECOME MORE DESPERATE. THEY SEIZED

ONE DOWN-TOWN BUILDING AND ANOTHER HALF-COMPLETED BLOCK
OF APARTMENTS IN OPORTO DURING NOV 25 COUP ATTEMPT
WHILE NORTHERNERS FOCUSED ON POLITICAL/MILITARY EVENTS IN
LISBON. I AM ALSO TRACKING DOWN RUMORS THAT DRUG ARRESTS HAVE
GREATLY INCREASED. SOME REFUGEES ARE SAID TO BE SMOKING
"LIAMA" SIMILAR TO HASHISH, LARGE QUANTITIES
OF WHICH REPORTEDLY ARRIVED IN RECENT MONTHS.

4. SOCIAL DEMOCRATS (CDS) HAVE GIVEN CONSIDERABLE LIP SERVICE TO
REFUGEES, THEIR PROBLEMS AND COLONIAL POLICY IN GENERAL.
HOWEVER, POPULAR DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PPD) APPEARS
TO BE TAKING MORE CONCRETE ACTION ON REFUGEES BEHALF. OPORTO
RESIDENTS ARE CURRENTLY BEING CANVASED ON DOOR-TO-DOOR BASIS
FOR DONATIONS OF CLOTHING UNDER DISCREET PPD AUSPICES.

5. COMMENT: CAPACITY FOR HARDSHIP AMONG REFUGEES HAS ITS LIMITS.
SOURCES TELL ME SOME REFUGEES HAVE CONSIDERABLE TALENTS TO
HELP PUT COUNTRY BACK ON ITS FEET ECONOMICALLY AND POLITICALLY
PROVIDED THEY HAVE STAKE IN THE FUTURE. I WOULD ALSO
ADD PROVIDED REFUGEES ARE NOT PUSHED TO POINT OF COMPLETE
DESPERATION.

PENNER

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